

Analysis



Office Technology & Services



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Environmental Sustainability and Workgroup Output

Service Areas

Digital Peripherals Solutions

Network Document Solutions

Professional & Managed Print Services

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Introduction

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), “environmental sustainability is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations.”

Sustainable practices in workgroup output contribute to overall sustainability efforts. There are a number of ways to institute environmentally sustainable practices in the workgroup that are helpful to the environment and will save organizations money. A sustainability program (SP) ensures that organizations meet their sustainability and cost containment goals.

Key Findings

- Many organizations are implementing sustainable environmental practices in their workgroup print and document management operations.
- Implementing a sustainability program in the workgroup results in significant dollar savings and ongoing environmental improvements.
- There is a relationship between a well-managed workgroup and effective sustainability initiatives. Both are reliant upon the effective use of technology and procedures. A related consequence of these initiatives are higher levels of employee satisfaction that is associated with higher performing organizations.
- Working with an experienced partner who has expertise and can provide continuous improvements is the most effective way to implement a sustainability program in the workgroup.

Recommendations

- Appoint someone in your organization who is responsible for managing your workgroup and has responsibility for sustainability and overall performance initiatives. Depending on the size of your organization this is typically an assignment, not a full time role.
- Conduct an audit to identify existing assets, costs, practices and to identify opportunities for improvement.
- Develop goals that are well publicized to gain support for the changes that will be required.
- Deploy tools that provide real time data on your workgroup fleet. This allows you to monitor compliance and progress in achieving your program goals.
- Work with a trusted partner to implement a sustainability program. They can apply their expertise while your organization can remain focused on its primary goals.

85%

In offices in the US
85% of 8.5x11 paper
is printed simplex
(on only one side).

Source: InfoTrends

The Legacy Workgroup Print Environment

The legacy workgroup print environment is characterized by a lack of information. Total costs are not clear. Ownership is lacking. Policies are lacking and as a result the cost and negative environmental impact are both higher than they should be.

Legacy workgroups typically have a number of older devices in the fleet that use more power, are manufactured in less sustainable methods and have fewer recyclable components.

Some other signs you have a legacy environment in need of a sustainability program:

- Low use of duplex (2-sided) printing and copying
- Banner pages are often used to help sort jobs at the device
- Consumables such as paper and cartridges are not recycled
- Devices are never turned off
- Orphan printed jobs are common and go to waste

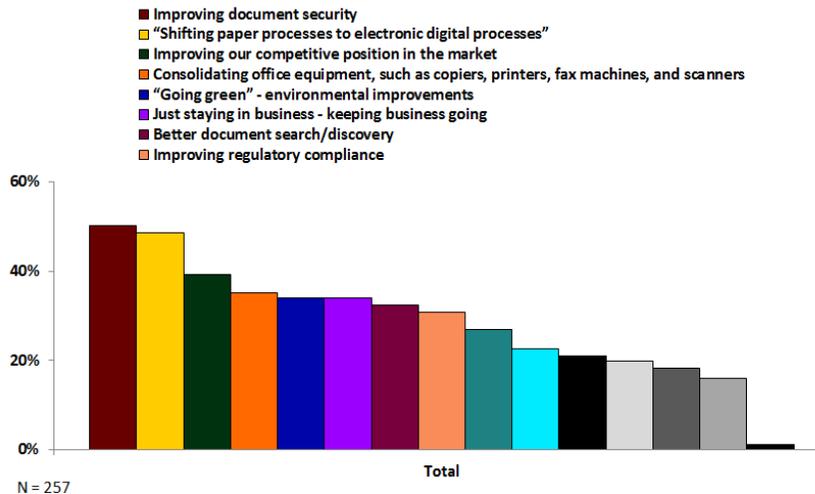
A sustainability program will address these issues and provide additional advantages such as lower costs. The US EPA estimates the average office worker uses 10,000 sheets of paper a year. A sheet of 20# white 8.5"x11" copier paper costs about \$.005. A 10% improvement in duplex (2-sided) printing is an annual savings of \$25 per employee.

The Benefits of a Sustainability Program

Many organizations have prioritized "Green" initiatives. As illustrated in Figure 1, 34% of the organizations we surveyed claimed "Going Green" was a business priority for 2013. Fortunately, pursuing environmental improvements in the workgroup output area will also address other priorities like shifting paper to electronic and consolidating equipment.

Sustainability is much more than saving paper and trees.

Source: InfoTrends

Figure 1. Business Priorities¹

Each sustainability program is tailored to the requirements of the organization and has unique attributes. Many of the benefits that can be realized are outlined below.

- **Decreased Paper Use:** Having the right equipment fleet (one that offers duplex or 2-sided printing) and duplex as a default option will result in paper savings. Another option is to deploy a 2-up printing option for common documents. While trees are a renewable resource, for every 8,333 sheets of paper you save, one less tree is required to meet your needs.
- **PC Fax:** Send documents directly from the PC to a fax machine to reduce paper and print.
- **Scan and Distribute:** By using the scan feature on your multi-function printer (MFP) you can send documents as PDF's that may eliminate the need to print and can eliminate the need to ship printed information.
- **Implement Secure Print:** Often called personal identification number (PIN) printing this feature allows users to send a job and not release it for printing until entering a PIN at the device. This can also be accomplished through user authentication at the device with a proximity card. Both of these methods can eliminate security concerns that often justify personal printers and helps eliminate abandoned jobs or having to reprint a job picked up by someone else saving paper and related costs.
- **Save Toner:** Many devices have a toner saving option. The resultant quality is often sufficient and you save 20% on toner use. Saving toner reduces cost and the energy required to manufacture toner.
- **Install Energy Efficient Devices:** When evaluating devices examine the annual energy cost. Two monochrome (print black only) MFP's that print 40 pages a minute (ppm) and 10,000 pages a year can have widely variant energy costs. In a random analysis we found one device to have an annual cost of \$280 and another \$35.

¹ InfoTrends, *Vertical Market Study* (2013)

ENERGY STAR devices use 25% less energy. Many MFP's have a quick start capability and an automatic standby option that saves on energy use. Less energy use results in reduced greenhouse gas emissions and saves money.

- **Recycle:** Office paper and toner cartridges should be recycled. Recycling reduces landfill and uses less energy overall. You can also use recycled paper that provides adequate quality for workgroup use.
- **Buy “Green” Devices:** Some devices use bio-based plastics that are more environmentally friendly. Some are refurbished and reuse components. Others use recycled plastics.

Outsourcing your Sustainability Program

While an organization can deploy a sustainability program using its own resources, most outsource this function as they lack the required expertise to address sustainability in the workgroup print environment. External print experts have the experience and the knowledge to deploy a successful sustainability program in the workgroup.

As with many functions, most organizations would rather focus on their core mission and partner for expertise in sustainability. The cost of training or hiring internal expertise doesn't provide the same return on investment (ROI) as engaging a partner. Among the benefits of outsourcing your sustainability program are the following:

- **The Right Equipment:** The important details of how devices are manufactured are more easily understood by a partner who sells these devices. Installing “green” devices in an important component of a strong sustainability program.
- **Deploying the Right Equipment Features:** Understanding product energy features and energy use is critical to a successful program. Devices should have standby and quick start capabilities to effectively save energy and meet user requirements. Total energy requirements and cost are an important part of the equation.
- **Installing the Right Software and Workflow:** A successful sustainability program must address the requirements of end users. It must take into account usability, productivity and sustainability. A sustainability program that inhibits productivity will not be successful. Having real time data on device use will allow programs to be effectively monitored.
- **Clear Responsibility:** A partner can be given responsibility for meeting your multiple goals of sustainability, productivity and cost effectiveness. They can focus on this initiative and manage its success while you can focus on your core mission.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Technology continues to improve. Deploying new tools and more energy efficient devices can result in new opportunities for savings. A partner should have expertise in change management and realistic policies.

Best Practices

Many suppliers can assist an organization to implement a sustainability program that addresses workgroup output. InfoTrends has identified a number of best practices that should be considered when choosing a partner including the following:

- **A Commitment to Improving the Environment:** Look for a partner who is committed to sustainability. Companies with a strong commitment will have equipment, software and expertise you can effectively leverage.
- **Local Presence:** Work with a partner who has local presence and can deliver ongoing value without a great deal of travel.
- **A Balanced View:** Work with a partner who will help you print efficiently when you do print and who understands that print has an enduring role. Avoid “greenwashing” zealots who lack an understanding of effectively printing and the appropriate use of paper.
- **A Commitment to Results and a Track Record of Success:** Implementing a successful sustainability program is challenging. It requires the right infrastructure, policies and communication. To achieve multiple goals of sustainability and cost effectiveness is even more complex. Work with a partner who has experience and is committed to your organization and the sustainability initiative.

Next Steps

The benefits of a sustainability program are evident. Your organization can be “greener.” At the same time you can save money and improve productivity as well as employee satisfaction. Your sustainability program can be complimentary to other actions such as Print Management. InfoTrends recommends taking the following steps:

- Appoint someone who will lead this initiative for your organization. They should be held accountable for the success of your implementation and manage its deployment working with a partner.
- Gather information about current paper and energy use.
- Develop your goals, objectives, timelines and the benefits that your organization requires.
- Effectively communicate your efforts. Explain what and why you are undertaking this initiative and provide regular feedback on your success.

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About InfoTrends

InfoTrends is the leading worldwide market research and strategic consulting firm for the digital imaging and document solutions industry. We provide research, analysis, forecasts, and advice to help clients understand market trends, identify opportunities, and develop strategies to grow their businesses.

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This analysis was commissioned by Canon Solutions America to help business leaders better understand how today's technology can optimize their business processes and how they can benefit by adopting these proven best practices.

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